Culture, History and Philosophy in the select Novels of Qurratulain Hyder in English Translation: A Critical Study

A Synopsis

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Title of the Proposed Research

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Introduction

Literature has been playing an important role in the life of human beings for the ages. It is the reflection of life and society. It represents the humanity, culture, and tradition of society. It was significant in the past and its importance has not been diminished still today. Its impact on modern society is undeniable as it allows us to better understand the world we live in. In the age of globalization literature written in one part of the world is read with great interest in other parts of the world.

Indian literature is arguably one of the oldest and richest literature in the world. Additionally, the oldest works of Indian literature include oral transmission of knowledge. India is a country with huge diversity and accommodates people from different cultural backgrounds. With over 22 official languages, the country has produced literature from all the languages. By transmission, we can study rich literature of great India

Indian Literature has been drawing the attention of the world's readers to it because of its substantial contributions to world literature. Indian literature has turned out to be a new form of Indian culture and voice through which Indian writers- poets, novelists, dramatists, and essayists with their creative literary works persistently make a tremendous and considerable contribution to world literature. Now it has gained a momentous place in world literature.

A novel as a major form of literature has become a strong medium of expression in the hands of novelists. It has its origin around the eighteenth century in the Italian word 'Novella' means 'new'. Merriam- Webster dictionary defines a novel *"an invented prose narrative that is usually long and complex and deals especially with human experience through a usually connected sequence of events."* Compared to other literary forms, it has become the most popular form of literature across the world. Novelists can have as much freedom as they want while writing a novel. They can convey their thoughts, opinions, ideology, views, etc. effortlessly and smoothly to the readers because it does not follow a

fixed set of rules and a rigid framework like other literary genres. The human inner thoughts, complex feelings, conflicting ideas, and values can be explored in a novel appropriately and properly. The principal function of the novel is to deal with the human condition in various environments. At present, it has become powerful and the perfect form of expression of the human condition. It owes its origin to Elizabethan prose fiction and French heroic romances, as they are considered its ancestors which were long narratives about contemporary characters who behaved nobly. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, a novel came into popular awareness because of the growing interest of the middle class in buying and reading books.

The journey of Indian English novels started in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It began with the two Bengali writers Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Lal Behari. Both of them published their novels in English 'Raj Mohan's wife (1864') 'Govind Samanta (1874)' respectively. It has witnessed numerous ups and downs in its journey toward becoming a popular literary genre of literature. Now it has achieved a distinctive and special place in Indian English literature by adopting a variety of themes and linguistic varieties.

The present research aims at selection, manifestation, investigation and analytical illustration of the notion of Indian Culture, Society and History with reference to selected novels of Qurratulain Hyder.

Culture is the most complicated word in the English language, says Raymond Williams. Cultural studies find its origin in the British cultural studies movement of the 1950s and late 1960sin the writing of Richard Hoggart, Stuart Hall and Raymond Williams. Culture is a broader concept that defines the pattern of human knowledge which imbibes customs, beliefs, social formations as well as racial, religious, political, social traits of groups or groups of people. It also denotes acquaintance and familiarization with humanities, fine arts, science, business, rituals and conventional and intellectual pursuits. Indian culture is the heritage of social norms, ethical values, traditional customs, belief systems, political systems, artifacts and technologies that originated in or are associated with the ethno-linguistically diverse Indian subcontinent. The term also applies beyond India to countries and cultures whose histories are strongly connected to India by immigration, colonization, or influence, particularly in South Asia and Southeast Asia. India's languages, religions, dance, music, architecture, food and customs differ from place to place within the country.

History is full of stories. Some are inspiring and uplifting; others are chaotic and immoral. Tap into the vivid realm of history, and there are many vital lessons we need to learn. They will study times of suffering and times of joy, and the lessons they learn here can then be applied to their own life experience. History also encourages a deeper understanding of difference. There are lessons, both good and bad, to be learned from the way our ancestors have interacted with other people who have different ways of living. In a modern world where inclusivity is embraced no matter your background, an understanding of how past societies have integrated is key to humanity improving in the future. The earliest Indian literature took the form of the canonical Hindu sacred writings, known as the Veda, which were written in Sanskrit. To the Veda were added prose commentaries such as the Brahmanas and the Upanishads. The production of Sanskrit literature extended from about 1500 BCE to about 1000 CE and reached its height of development in the 1st to 7th centuries CE. In addition to sacred and philosophical writings, such genres as erotic and devotional lyrics, court poetry, plays, and narrative folktales emerged.

The study of **philosophy** enhances a person's problem-solving capacities. It helps us to analyze concepts, definitions, arguments, and problems. It contributes to our capacity to organize ideas and issues, deal with questions of value, and extract what is essential from large quantities of information. It helps us, on the one hand, to distinguish fine and subtle differences between views and, on the other hand, to discover common ground between opposing positions. It also helps us to synthesize a variety of views or perspectives into one unified whole. Indian philosophy, the systems of thought and reflection that were developed by the civilizations of the Indian subcontinent. They include both orthodox (astika) systems, namely, the Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva-Mimamsa (or Mimamsa), and Vedanta schools of philosophy, and unorthodox (nastika) systems, such as Buddhism and Jainism. Indian thought has been concerned with various philosophical problems, significant among which are the nature of the world (cosmology), the nature of reality (metaphysics), logic, the nature of knowledge (epistemology), ethics, and the philosophy of religion.

In this research proposal Qurratulain Hyder‟s contribution to the presentation of Indian culture, history and Philosophy in the five selected novels. It also includes the aims and objectives, hypothesis, justification, methodology, review of literature, significance, scope, and limitations of the present study.

Qurratulain Hyder (20 January 1927 – 21 August 2007) was one of the most celebrated Urdu fiction writers. A pioneer in Urdu fiction, she began writing at a time when the novel was yet to take deep roots as a serious genre in the poetry-oriented society of Urdu literature. She was an Indian Urdu novelist and short story writer, an academic, and a journalist. One of the most outstanding and influential literary names in the world of Urdu literature, she is best known for her *Aag Ka Darya (River of Fire*), a novel first published in Urdu in 1959, that stretches from the 4th century BC to the post-partition of India. She received the Sahitya Akademi Award in Urdu for *Patjhar Ki Awaz (1967),* Jnanpith Award for *Akhire Shab Ke Humsafar (1989),* and the highest award of the Sahitya Akademi, India's National Academy of Letters, the Sahitya Akademi Fellowship in 1994. She was also honoured with the Padma Bhushan from the Government of India in 2005. Qurratulain Hyder was a foremost Urdu novelist who explored and presented the issues of partition, culture, myth, politics, history, philosophy and social issues in the novels of Qurratulain Hyder is the prime intention of this research.

Review of Literature:

Since the publication of Qurratulain Hyder's first novel *Mere Bhi Sanamkhane (My Temples, Too* scholars are reading her novels for various possible interpretations. Many authors have published their research in the form of a book and others in refereed journals. Asaduddin. M. "*The Novels of Qurratulain Hyder." (1991)*:and the *River of Fire:* The Meaning Scope and Significance of her Legacy. Rakhshanda Jalil (2011) is one of the best available discussions in India. There are also many anthologies of articles edited by brilliant researchers like Dr.Y.Suneetha, Sk. Shakila Bhanu (2017), Nigar Alam (2017), Tahseen Fatima (2018) and Mirza, Umbereen Beg. 2020. Still many have published their research on the works of Qurratulain Hyder on issues such as history, society, subaltern, travel, post-coloniality, nationalism, language. After a careful review of available literature, it is confirmed that a few of these have suggested areas for further studies and taking a link from previous research the topic, Indian culture, history and philosophy in the Novels of Qurratulain Hyder is selected for the current research. Novels that present opportunities for exploring the issues under consideration are carefully selected. In the era of globalization, the study of Indian culture, history and philosophy is a critical study that makes appropriate research.

Objectives of the Research:

The objectives of the present research study are to define and plan the research followed by identifying and reviewing the current state of previously published and unpublished work forms the preliminary objectives of the study. Application of specific methods of literary research to achieve verifiable results. To analyze the results and drawing conclusions about the contributions to knowledge made by the study are also indispensable elements of research. However, the main focus of the study is on the following points:

1. To analyze the meaning of cultural, historical and philosophical aspects in Qurratulain Hyder's fiction.
2. To analyze the modes of conceptualizing culture, history and philosophy in the selected novels
3. The present study aims at studying a Socio-cultural aspect in the selected novels.
4. To undertake close scrutiny of the figurations and configurations of the cross conditions from a cultural point of view.
5. To study the cultural, historical and philosophical crossover experience and its impact on characters.

Hypothesis:

The contribution of Qurratulain Hyder as a novelist is notable. She handles a multiplicity of themes in her novels. The dimensions of her themes cover important aspects concerning humanity. She deals with themes such as culture, gender, partition, identity, Social reality and myth and is full of historical aspects. By undertaking the study of the themes and techniques in her fiction, the researcher would like to focus new light upon the comprehensive analysis of her novels.

Research Methodology:

This research will analyse and evaluate the novels based on a thorough reading of the novels written by Qurratulain Hyder. The research will intend to use descriptive, analytical and interpretative methods for the present research work. This research will be analysing, examining, discussing, and doing a closed and critical reading of the primary and secondary sources in terms of social and cultural context. The proposed research attempt to consult source data related to select research work. Article, reference books, publications, magazines, reports, records, interviews, internet, newspaper, E-sources such as e-books; e-journals, etc will be used for the completion of the proposed study.

Significance of the Study:

The exploration of these novels from the perspective of culture, history and philosophy would be widely essential to understanding the dimensions of inferiority. There are diverse approaches to study literature, however, the issues taken for consideration would create consciousness about human relationships, history, myth, hegemony, ideology and discrimination in Indian society. Information technology, science, globalization and westernization have deeply influenced our lives but still in metropolitan families and societies as well as rural families and societies culture, and politics have been playing an integral part. This study would elaborate through the novels. The study may open an avenue for research into exploring the fictional world of Qurratulain Hyder.

Tentative Chapter Scheme:

Chapter-I

Introduction

The introductory chapter will be an Endeavour at placing Qurratulain Hyder in the Modern Indian literary context. With due emphasis on the author's understudy, due credit will be given to the predecessors, the forerunners of Indian novels in English who set the stage and prepared the soil for the contemporary novelists. The culture, history and Philosophy will be studied in the light of the incidents narrated by the novelist in selected novels

Chapter-II

Review of literature

The researcher proposes to review the literature on the topic for the present study. It will be an attempt to mention the study done in the form of research articles, theses, dissertations, and books.

Chapter-III

Culture and it's Context

This chapter will detail the relevance of culture in both life and literature. It would explore its wider acceptance and existence along with gender and politics. To establish this argument all the five select novels will be taken into consideration. Culture imbibes several norms, traditions, rituals, customs and beliefs. Every cultural clan of the world creates a ladder to maintain its significance and role.

Chapter- IV.

History and its Essence

This chapter will study the history and historical aspects which are presented in detail in select novels of Qurratulain Hyder. "History" is an umbrella term comprising past events as well as the memory, discovery, collection, organization, presentation, and interpretation of these events.

Chapter-V

Philosophical Perception

This chapter would be a detailed study of philosophy and its implication in the five select novels. This chapter would narrate, analyze, and evaluate Philosophy and its role in constructing the themes in the novels of Qurratulain Hyder. The characters, events, and incidents in her novels are ample to study the role of Philosophy in constructing the cultural pattern of the society and the submissive creation of norms.

Chapter-VI

Conclusion

This chapter proposes to sum up the arguments and observations recorded in earlier chapters. It would pinpoint and analyze, elaborate the findings leading to select novels in culture, history and Philosophy chapter would correlate and test the objectives to record findings and see if the answer to the posed questions is discovered. It is observed that culture, history and Philosophy are at the forefront of human lives. It collects the lives of all strata persons directly and indirectly. These issues dominate in myth, history, culture, and language and it offers a dividing structure of society where no two human beings are treated as equal.

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